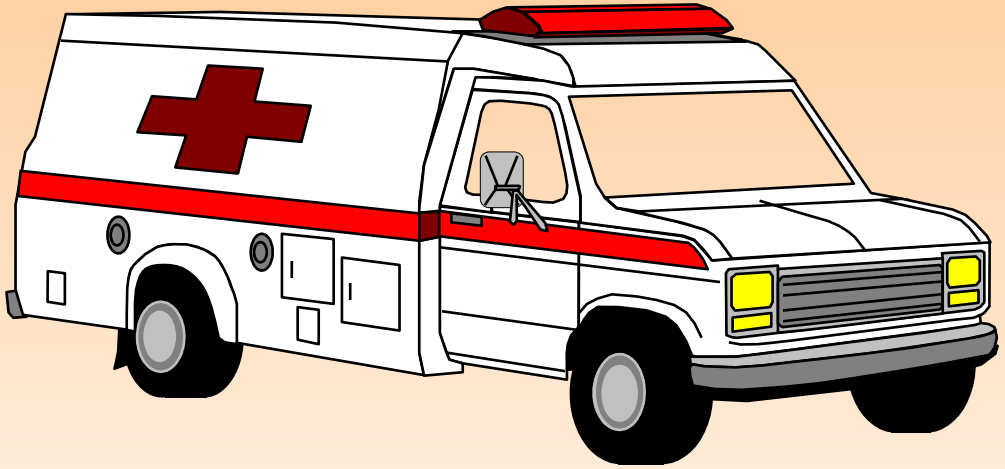
Ambulance Operations



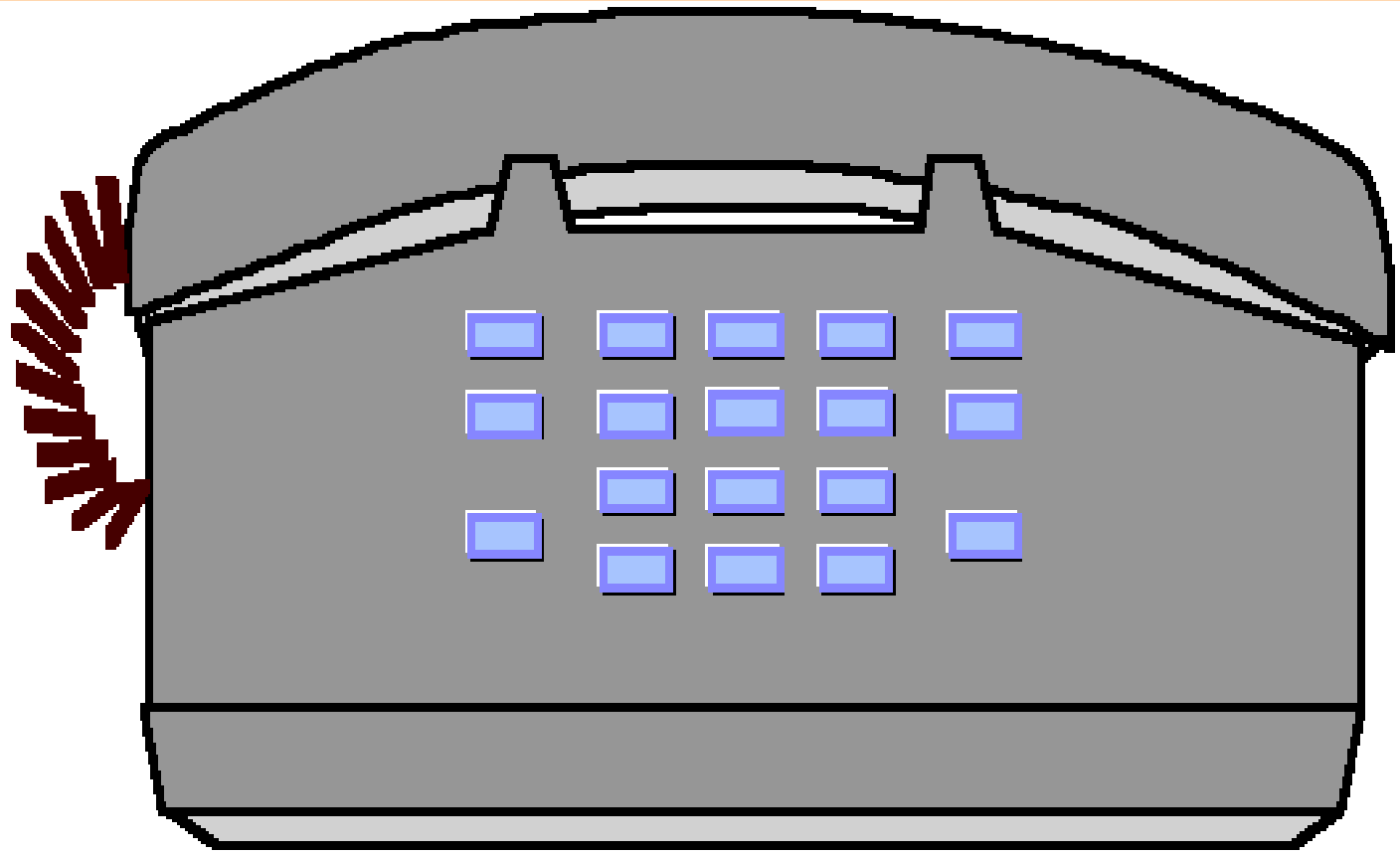
SrA Heintzelman

Overview

- Phases of an Ambulance Call
- Air Medical Operations

Phases of an ambulance call

Preparation for the call



Equipment

- Medical Basic supplies Patient transfer equipment Airways
- Suction equipment Artificial ventilation devices Oxygen inhalation equipment
- Cardiac compression equipment Basic wound care supplies

- Splinting supplies Childbirth supplies
- Medications
- Automated external defibrillator

Non-medical

- Personal safety equipment per local, state, and federal standards
- Pre-planned routes or comprehensive street maps

Personnel

- Available for response
- At least one EMT-Basic in patient compartment is minimum staffing for an ambulance - two is preferred.

Daily inspections

Inspection of vehicle systems

- Fuel
- Oil
- Engine cooling system
- Battery
- Brakes
- Wheels and tires
- Headlights
- Stoplights
- Turn signals
- Emergency warning lights

- Wipers
- Horn
- Siren
- Doors closing and latching
- Communication system
- Air conditioning/heating system
- Ventilation system

Equipment

- Checked and maintained
- Restocked and repaired
- Batteries for defibrillator, suction, oxygen, etc.

Utilization of safety precautions and seat belts.

Dispatch

- Central access
- 24-hour availability
- Trained personnel

Dispatch information

- Nature of call
- Name, location, and callback number of caller
- Location of patient
- Number of patients and severity
- Other special problems

En route

- Seat belts
- Notify dispatch - refer to Communications module
- Essential information
  - Nature of the call
  - Location of the call

Driving the ambulance

Emergency vehicle operations

- It is recommended, and in some states mandated, that the driver of an emergency vehicle attend an approved driving course.

Characteristics of good ambulance operators

- Physically fit
- Mentally fit
- Able to perform under stress
- Positive attitude about abilities
- Tolerant of other drivers

Safe driving is an important phase in the emergency medical care of the ill or injured patient.

- The driver and all passengers should wear safety belts.
- Become familiar with the characteristics of your vehicle.
- Be alert to changes in weather and road conditions.
- Exercise caution in use of red lights and siren.

Safe driving

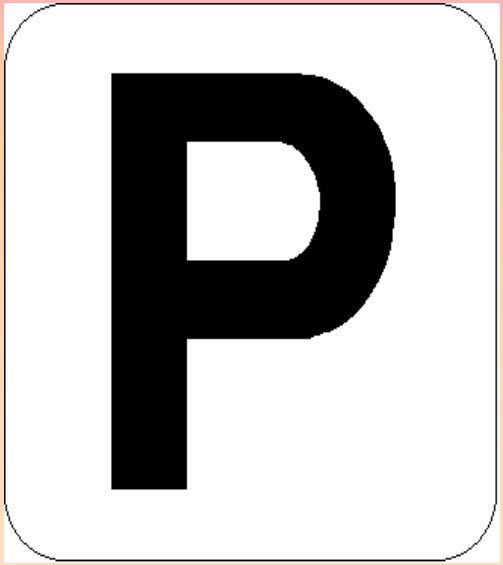
- Select appropriate route.
- Maintain safe following distance.
- Drive with due regard for safety of all others.
- Know appropriateness of using lights and sirens.
- Headlights are the most visible warning device on an emergency vehicle.

Obtain additional information from dispatch.

- Assign personnel to specific duties.
- Assess specific equipment needs.

Positioning the unit

- For safety
- Uphill from leaking hazards
- 100 feet from wreckage
- In front of the wreckage or,
- Beyond the wreckage



- Set parking brake
- Utilize warning lights
- Shut off headlights unless there is a need to illuminate the scene.
- To exit the scene. Avoid parking in a location that will hamper exit from the scene.

- Laws, regulations and ordinances - review state and local laws, regulations or ordinances in the area relative to the operations of an emergency vehicle, including as needed:
  - Vehicle parking or standing
  - Procedures at red lights, stop signs and intersections

- Regulations regarding speed limits
- Direction of flow or specified turns
- Emergency or disaster routes
- Use of audible warning devices
- Use of visual warning devices
- School buses

Escorts and multiple vehicle response

- Extremely dangerous
- Used only if unfamiliar with location of patient or receiving facility
- No vehicle should use lights or siren.
- Provide a safe following distance.
- Recognize hazards of multiple vehicle response.

Intersection crashes - most common type

- Motorist arriving at intersection as light changes and does not stop.
- Multiple emergency vehicles following closely and waiting motorist does not expect more than one.
- Vision is obstructed by vehicles.

Arrival at scene

- Notify dispatch
- Size-up
  - Body substance isolation
  - Should be a consideration prior to patient contact.
  - Use gloves, gowns and eyewear when appropriate.

Scene safety - assess the scene for hazards.

- Is the emergency vehicle parked in a safe location?
- Is it safe to approach the patient?
- Does the victim require immediate movement because of hazards?

Mechanism of injury/nature of illness

- Medical
  - Mass casualty incident
  - Number of patients.
  - Obtain additional help.
  - Begin triage.
  - Spine stabilization if necessary.

Mechanism of injury/nature of illness (cont'd)

- Trauma
  - Mass casualty incident
  - Number of patients.
  - Obtain additional help.
  - Begin triage.
  - Spine stabilization if necessary.

Total number of patients.

- Need for additional help or assistance.

Actions at scene.

- Organized
- Rapid/efficient
- Goal of transport in mind

Transferring the patient to the ambulance

- Preparing the patient for transport
  - Completion of critical interventions
  - Check dressings and splints.
  - Patient covered and secured to moving device
- Lifting and moving is accomplished using the guidelines of the lifting/moving module (Module 1, Lesson 1-5).

En route to the receiving facility

- Notify dispatch.

On-going assessment should be continued.

- Additional vital sign measurements should be obtained.
- Notify receiving facility.
- Reassure patient.
- Complete prehospital care reports.

At receiving facility

- Notify dispatch.

Transferring the patient at the facility

- Reports
- Complete verbal report is given at bedside.
- Complete written report is completed and left prior to returning to service.
- Lifting and moving is accomplished using the guidelines of the lifting/moving module (Module 1, Lesson 1-5).

En route to station

- At station or receiving facility, notify dispatch.
- Prepare for the next call.
  - Clean and disinfect the ambulance as needed.
  - Clean and disinfect ambulance equipment.
  - Restock the disposable supplies.

Post run

- Refuel unit.
- File reports.
- Complete cleaning and disinfection procedures.
- Notify dispatch.

Air Medical Consideration

- Utilization
- Landing zones

Questions???

Summary

- Phases of an Ambulance Call
- Air Medical Operations